

Make another try—  
you're entitled to a  
raincheck every time  
you make a clean  
failure

# Herbert Kaufman's Weekly Page

You may occasionally  
strike opportunity with  
a stray shot, but  
you'll usually hit  
where you aim.

## The Watch vs. the Foot-Rule

By HERBERT KAUFMAN

Distance is a Will o' the Wisp, a mirage, an invariable fact and an elastic theory.

Estimates based on *spaces* are subject to *incessant* revision, since we discarded the *foot-rule* for the *watch-hand* and measure by *minutes* instead of *miles*.

Remember that in *your* calculations or we'll forget you in *ours*.

If you want to find the *shortest* route, refer to a *clock-dial*, not a map.

You can get along without an *atlas* but you can't manage without a *time-card*.

The earth is steadily shrinking under the pressure of ingenuity. Inventors are gradually squeezing all the continents into one.

Your grandfather's geography is ridiculously *inaccurate*—it told *him* that the Pacific Ocean was a full *three months'* journey from the Atlantic Coast, whereas every schoolboy *knows* it's barely a *four days'* trip.

America used to be six months *further* from China and the earth was so huge in *Magellan's* century that it took *years* to sail around it.

*Speed* is the *dominating* dimension.

Steam, electricity and gasoline have wrought the change.

*Instant transformation* follows upon *rapid transportation*.

Turning wheels and churning screws have condensed the land and drained the sea.

Nature formerly gave certain countries and specific cities peculiar commercial advantages, but the peoples and communities that expect to *maintain* their position because of *propinquity* to a given *point* or *port*, soon find their *natural* superiority challenged and frequently discounted, by rivals whom vast stretches of country once held from competition.

Faster ships, better harbors and newer machinery *more* than *overcome* the *handicap* of *remoteness*.

The Twentieth Century canceled all charters of leadership. Towns can no longer lie back and wait for commerce to put in appearance.

Prosperity doesn't "happen", any more. Opportunity doesn't pause at doors with *knockers*—they're only on *out-of-date* establishments—she presses *bell-buttons*—they tell the tale.

Old-fashioned ideas won't serve the needs of a new fangled period.

Nor can the *men* who *cling* to them.

There's no more chance for *short-sighted* individuals than there is for moss-grown municipalities. Organizations of which you may never hear, are including your district in their plans—snatching orders from right under your nose.

They're attacking you with all the arsenals of efficiency; invading your domain via telephone and motor car; piecing out their reach by every available minute-and-penny-cutter.

Contractors, states away, can outbid unprogressive local firms, deduct the transport of their equipment and men and *still* finish the work on schedule, with a heavier profit than builders right on the ground.

Jobbers find the retailer next door dealing on *closer* terms with catalogue houses three days removed and averaging *prompter* delivery of his orders.

Wake up—acquire an *aeroplane* and *wireless* habit of mind—it's *half-past hurry o'clock*.

## The Drowsing Dragon

**A** DRAGON drowsing in a poppy patch; drugged with dreams of past power; sleeping upon half the wealth of the universe.

The might of four hundred millions under the spell of fatalism.

Claws that could have ripped a path across the world clipped by complacency.

A host without leaders—competent but uninspired, industrious but unorganized, cunning and unambitious, overbred and underfed, skilled but undrilled, remembering ancestors and forgetting descendants—with precedent for a tutor and idols for gods—fabulously rich in resources, shamefully poor in resource.

Opportunity knocks with bruised knuckles at her walls and none hear, or hearing, care or dare.

A monster nation become a monstrous slug.

A yellow Titan without a backbone.

An ancient crone mincing along the Road of Time on bandaged feet.

This is China.

## If

**I**F—down the street, you hear the beat  
Of stranger drums; and the foe comes  
To rape and raze; if—cities blaze

And they drag the flag,

That your fathers gave in trust,

Into the dust

And the crust

Is torn from your children's hands,

And bands

Of raiders give their lust

Free play,

Then you will say:

"My choice was right when I declared

Against those who cried 'unprepared!'"

## Heads Win

**F**ORTUNE flirts with fools but abides with wise men.

If you don't know her ways, you can't detect her wiles.

Speculation produces about a hundred bankrupts to one millionaire—the hundred expect to be hit by golden lightning and the other grows rich collecting fees for the privilege of waiting for the accident.

Professional gamblers of all kinds exist through people who take chances. It's the one thing that they personally never do—their success depends upon ability to eliminate risk. They never count on the run of the cards.

Wall Street occasionally allows a lamb to fatten on its slopes. If a limited few weren't permitted to eat a little grass, there would be no bell-wethers to run bleating off to the pastures where the muttonheads flock, and lead new victims to the slaughter.

On the other hand, there are far-sighted, shrewd calculators who can analyze conditions and figure the forces that produce them. It isn't extraordinary that people who read barometers should be able to provide against storms or anticipate the coming of sunshine.

Anybody who plays cards by their spots must win from idiots who try to read the backs.

The only stock market luck is bad luck and that's simply an alias for bad judgment.

A person who won't employ his head must expect to put his foot in it.

Any man who kept track of European events, could have foreseen the tremendous and continued demand for copper and the increased earnings of the mining corporations. Their securities were bound to grow more valuable with the continuation of the war.

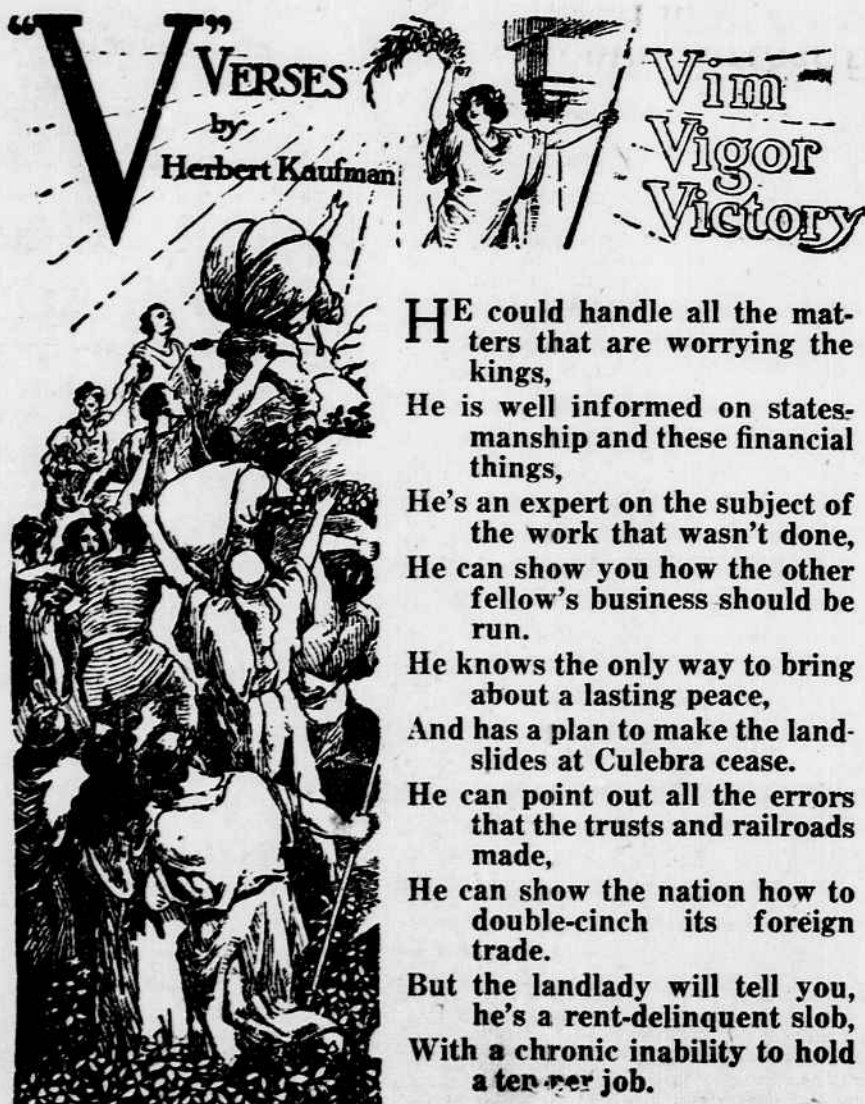
If there ever was an explicable and manifest certainty, this was one.

Here's the secret of the stock market—"in every toss-up, *heads win*."

## Aesop on Advertising

**T**HE ass who wore the lion's skin was the original fool advertiser—when he tried to roar, he simply drew attention to the fact that he couldn't deliver the goods.

Publicity is never profitable to frauds. That's why second-class manufacturers and merchants keep out of print. They don't want you to know who's back of the "skin."



## Every Man His Own Borgia

**I**F on your next trip to Africa, you should chance to fall ill while passing through a n'Gombi village, the local witch doctor will insist that a devil is to blame.

But "raising the devil," in some form or other, will probably be the real cause of your trouble.

Science now knows that every man is his own Borgia.

Excesses and indulgences, rage and passion, create deadly poisons. Some of us have an extraordinary amount of stamina and throw them off, but if we continue to abuse ourselves, there comes a time when the secretions gradually set up in our organs by hate and anger, excitement, fear, gluttony and overwork, find a weak spot and produce serious ailments.

Perhaps you can recall occasions when, about to cave in from exhaustion, your strength was suddenly renewed and you were able to continue at high pitch for hours.

We used to call that "second wind." You felt as though you had taken a stiff slug of brandy or a dose of strychnine. The equivalent of which was precisely what you did get, only your own body furnished it.

You wore yourself to a poisonous state of fatigue and created a toxin which worked into your blood and quickened your heart just as a drug-store stimulant would act.

All intemperate persons, especially folks who live at high tension, are liable to auto-intoxication which, in street English, simply means self-poisoning.

Good health is mainly a matter of moderation.